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The Director's cut



THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

WELCOME TO THE AUGUST EDITION OF ABSTRACT

The August edition marks the first edition of ABstract since I commenced in the role of ACT Regional Director. As we prepare this edition, I am in the process of meeting as many of you as possible and I look forward to working together with the ACT Government and community as we face coming challenges.

The major event on the horizon is of course, the 2011 Census of Population and Housing in August next year. The five yearly Census is of paramount importance to the ACT as it produces a range of data that assists the Government in its planning to deliver services where and when they are needed, as well as the population estimates that are critical in determining the ACT's share of Commonwealth funding. It is important that we get it right. To achieve this, staff from the ACT office will be talking to a wide range of Government officials and community leaders to seek support in the running of the Census in the ACT.

Over the next three months I hope to have the opportunity to meet many of you to explore how the ABS can help you, not only with your data needs, but also with the management and use of your own data to help you undertake your business, whether it be policy development or the task of reporting for COAG.

In November, the National Statistical Service (NSS) is holding the 2010 NatStats Conference. This conference gives staff from different jurisdictions the chance to meet, learn about **Economic development, wellbeing and progress in 21st century Australia** and network with officers from other States and Territories who are responsible for the development and management of data. There is more information on how to attend in the [NatStats section](#) of this newsletter.

Finally, a short introduction of myself. I started work many years ago in the methodology area of

the ABS and since then have worked in a variety of public service agencies, most significantly, the ACT Department of Education and Training and the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Both these jobs have given me a useful insight into both the data needs of the ACT Government and the data that they produce. The role of the ACT Regional Director is an exciting opportunity for me and I look forward to further building on the fine work of my predecessor Beidar Cho, who has left the ABS to work in another Commonwealth agency.

Stephen Collett Regional Director ACT office



ACT Government news and events



ACT GOVERNMENT NEWS AND EVENTS

Information in this section was contributed by the ACT Chief Minister's Department.

MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

ACT Chief Minister's Department has recently completed a new Measuring Our Progress website as an online report card on life in Canberra. The indicators being measured on the website have been chosen to provide the most complete picture of our progress towards the sustainable well-being of Canberrans.

The website has been designed to report against high-level outcomes and objectives that measure the progress of the ACT community, not just of the ACT Government. The website will ensure that data remains current, improving its capacity to inform community engagement and the development of government policy. The website also further strengthens data collection and management capability across government, supporting the demands for more detailed reporting, particularly through Council of Australian Governments, and evidence-based policy development.

The website is aligned with the seven strategic themes of The Canberra Plan: Towards Our Second Century - the ACT Government's plan to help create an even better place to live.

The website replaces the Measuring Our Progress report, which was previously released in hard copy.

The website is one element in a program of work currently being led by ACT Chief Minister's Department to improve performance and accountability across government, and builds on a preliminary report by the Allens Consulting Group, which is available on the CMD website (www.cmd.act.gov.au). An updated performance and accountability framework is expected to be released before the end of the year.

The Measuring Our Progress report card can be accessed at www.MeasuringOurProgress.act.gov.au.

2011 Census information



2011 CENSUS INFORMATION

UPDATES

The Census of Population and Housing is the largest statistical collection undertaken by the ABS and aims to:

- accurately measure the number of people in Australia on Census Night, their key characteristics, and the dwellings in which they live; and
- provide timely, high quality and relevant data for small geographic areas and small population groups.

The Census is conducted every five years, with the next planned for the night of 9 August 2011. The scope of the Census is all people in Australia on Census Night, other than foreign diplomats and their families. Visitors to Australia are counted regardless of how long they have been in the country or how long they plan to stay. More information on the Census can be found in [How Australia Takes a Census, 2006](#) (cat. no. 2903.0), which will be updated in the lead up to the 2011 Census. The content of the 2011 Census will basically be the same as for the 2006 Census - find out more in [Census of Population and Housing: Nature and Content, 2011](#) (cat. no. 2008.0).

The 2011 Census results will be released on the new geography standard, the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) - further information can be found in [Discussion Paper: Census of Population and Housing - ABS Views on 2011 Census Output Geography, 2011](#) (cat. no. 2911.0.55.002). The smallest geographical unit of the ASGS for which full 2011 Census statistics will be published will be the Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1). The SA1 will be composed of aggregates of Meshblocks and for the ACT will, for the most part, be the same as the 2006 Census Collection Districts (CDs).

eCENSUS

For the 2006 Census, the option of completing the form electronically (eCensus) was provided for the first time. It proved to be a big hit in the ACT with 16% of households filling in their Census form on-line. This was not surprising as the ACT had the highest rate of computer use and Internet connection in Australia. An important element for the 2011 Census will be to further encourage households to make greater use of eCensus, for the ACT this is expected to be over 30% in 2011. The eCensus option provides a secure environment and a more efficient collection method, which leads to faster processing of Census information, giving communities and decision makers earlier access to results.

Important dates over the next 14 months

Dates
Meshblocks finalised

Workload design complete	30 Sep 2010
Divisional Managers	
Recruitment	Oct-Dec 2010
Training	Jan-Feb 2011
Area Supervisors	
Recruitment	Feb-Mar 2011
Training	Apr-May 2011
Collectors	
Recruitment	Apr-May 2011
Training	May-Jun 2011
Delivery of forms	29 Jul-8 Aug 2011
CENSUS DAY	9 Aug 2011
Collection	10-28 Aug 2011
Post collection activity	to 4 Sep 2011

The value of outpostings



THE VALUE OF OUTPOSTINGS

THE VALUE OF ABS OUTPOSTINGS

Since mid March the ACT Office of the ABS has placed Fiona Tearne in the Chief Minister's Department as an outposted Demographic Officer. Fiona is working closely with the ACT Demographer Gemma Wood on a number of demographic projects for the ACT Government as well as providing advice on the use of fit for purpose data in line with the Information Development Plan across all ACT Government agencies. The projects being covered include:

- Population Ageing in the ACT: Issues and Analysis, which provides information and analysis on issues such as Health, Transport and Housing;
- ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, covering the ACT and surrounding region providing information and analysis in areas such as Learning and Skills, Housing, and Health;
- Statistical and quantitative analysis on a wide range of issues that inform whole of government policy development in a range of areas including children and youth, data collection, storage and sharing standards;
- Assistance in progressing ACT statistical and information development through the Information Development Steering Committee and Information Development Working Group.

Gemma Wood has indicated that this outposting has been invaluable in providing assistance in data analysis and the preparation of the demographic reports soon to be published on the Chief Minister's Department website.

An outposted officer is one of the best ways the ABS has to provide statistical support to State and Territory Government agencies. Outposting arrangements can be designed around the nature of the project and do not necessarily have to be full-time. Equally the length of time can be decided on the specific project.

An outposting is tailored to suit the needs of the agency into which an ABS officer is placed. Some examples to which an outposting may be applied are:

- Assisting agencies in reviewing their administrative data holdings and turning this information

into useful statistical outputs for themselves and other users.

- Encouraging agencies to make greater use of statistical information and tools in their work.
- Assisting agencies in the development of specific surveys and questionnaire design.

If you are interested in having an outposted officer in your department, then please contact Stephen Collett on 6252 8921.

Fiona Tearne outposted officer to the Chief Minister's Department



Australian Social Trends



AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL TRENDS

NEW EDITION

The ABS released the latest edition of Australian Social Trends (cat. no. 4102.0) on 30 June 2010. The publication draws together a wide range of statistics from the ABS and other official sources to provide a picture of Australian society and how it is changing over time.

The latest edition features six articles:

- Population growth: past, present and future
- Men's health
- Child care
- Underemployment
- Who's afraid? Feelings of personal safety
- Environmental awareness and action

The publication shows that:

The Australian Capital Territory had the highest rates of concern about the environment and climate change. In the Australian Capital Territory, nine-tenths of adults (90%) were concerned about the environment and 81% of adults were concerned about climate change.

More adults in the Australian Capital Territory reported sorting out recyclable from non-recyclable waste than other states and territories. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest rates of recycling (93%) while the Northern Territory and Western Australia had the lowest (64% and 69%)

respectively).

The proportion of adults who felt unsafe when alone in certain situations was lower in the Australian Capital Territory (19%) than the national average (26%) and considerably lower than the proportion in the Northern Territory (35%) or Western Australia (31%).

MEASURES OF AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS: REGIONAL DATA

Measures of Australia's Progress (cat. no. 1370.0) tries to answer the question: 'is life in Australia getting better?' The next edition is due for release on 15 September 2010 as a web based publication. There will be spreadsheets containing the data used in MAP available to download and for the headline indicators, state and territory data will also be available (where applicable). The publication will also include, for the first time, a slim-line brochure which highlights key information from MAP.

Year Book Australia



2009-10 EDITION

The 2009-10 Year Book Australia was launched by the Governor-General, Ms Quentin Bryce AC at a ceremony at ABS House in Canberra.



"I am delighted to launch the 2009-10 Year Book Australia. It's an important account of Australian life, the economy and our culture, documented in a single reference source", Ms Bryce said.

The Australian Statistician, Brian Pink said, "At every issue, Year Book Australia illustrates Australia's position at that given point in time."

"It is an historic record of relevance now and to future generations," Mr Pink said, "This issue features topics Australians find important, to themselves and the nation, such as biodiversity, immigration and Indigenous Australians."

This edition, the 91st, is the latest in a long series of editions extending back to the first in 1908. It provides a comprehensive overview of the economic and social conditions of contemporary Australia. It is a statistically-oriented publication with sufficient background information to establish a context for the statistics and to assist in understanding and interpreting them. It also contains descriptive matter dealing with Australia's geography and climate, the environment, government, international relations, defence, education, and the health and welfare systems.

The 2009-10 Year Book Australia reflects on the International Years of Biodiversity and the Rapprochement of Cultures and also pays tribute to the Australian Year of the Girl Guide. Further information is available in [Year Book Australia, 2009-10](#) (cat. no. 1301.0).

Net Overseas Migration



NET OVERSEAS MIGRATION

NEW DATA AVAILABLE

With the introduction of improved methods for estimating Net Overseas Migration (NOM) the ABS has developed an analytical dataset called the Travellers Characteristics Data Base. These improvements allow the derivation of an individual's actual travel behaviour (using final NOM data) and record certain characteristics for any traveller who has contributed to NOM. The database provides for additional analysis of final NOM data that was not previously available. The following variables are available on request for final NOM data only:

- Age (as at 30 June)
- Citizenship (nationality)
- Country of birth
- Initial category of travel
- Marital status (not available for Australian and New Zealand citizens)
- Reference year (available from 2004 - final data only)
- Sex
- Type of traveller (NOM arrival or NOM departure - based on actual recorded duration of stay in or out of Australia)
- Visa type
- Australian residents
 - Country spent/intend to spend most time abroad
 - Main reason for journey (only available for temporary resident departures) and
 - State or territory of intended address/state or territory of residence.
- Overseas visitors:
 - Country of residence
 - Main reason for journey (only available for temporary visitor arrivals) and
 - State or territory of intended address/in which most time was spent.

To discuss requesting a table from the Travellers Characteristics Data Base email

demography@abs.gov.au or telephone Neil Scott on 02 6252 5959.

Estimated Resident Population



ESTIMATED RESIDENT POPULATION

RELEASE CHANGES

Six-monthly revisions to Estimated Resident Population

Estimated Resident Population (ERP) revisions will occur six-monthly from September 2010 onwards with the release of [Australian Demographic Statistics](#) for March quarter 2010 (cat. no. 3101.0). These improvements are designed to give a more up-to-date and accurate ERP by using more up-to-date Net Overseas Migration (NOM) data.

As outlined in [Information Paper: Improving Net Overseas Migration Estimation](#), Mar 2010 (cat. no. 3412.0.55.001), in consultation with major stakeholders, ABS will change the current annual revision cycle for publishing final NOM to a six-monthly revision cycle. While this will not have any impact on the difference between preliminary and final NOM estimates, this change will provide for the earlier release of revised ERP figures.

MERGING OF AGE-SEX POPULATION ESTIMATES INTO AUSTRALIAN DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS (CAT. NO. 3101.0)

From March quarter 2010 (scheduled for release in September 2010), Australian Demographic Statistics (cat. no. 3101.0) will include ERP broken down by age and sex, and other associated data which has previously been published in [Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories](#) (cat. no. 3201.0). The inclusion of age-sex data in this publication will ensure consistency between ERP totals and the relevant age-sex breakdown at all times, particularly following ERP revisions. The production of Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories (cat. no. 3201.0) will cease following the release of June quarter 2010 data (scheduled for release in December 2010).

Australian Health Survey



AUSTRALIAN HEALTH SURVEY

BIGGEST EVER

The health of Australians will be getting its most comprehensive check-up ever, with the announcement of the Australian Health Survey to be conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The survey is being planned in close consultation with the Department of Health and Ageing and

the National Heart Foundation of Australia.

It will include new and better measures of what Australians are eating and how physically active they are. It will also collect other health information, such as whether people have been diagnosed with arthritis or heart disease.

In another first, the survey will also measure chronic disease risk factors such as cholesterol levels and blood pressure.

The survey will also ask people to consider a visit to a pathology centre so that information on health risks factors can be derived from blood and urine samples. This will give a more accurate picture of the number of Australians with health issues such as high cholesterol, diabetes risk or poor nutritional status.

Around 50,000 people across Australia will be asked to take part in the survey, which is planned to start in April 2011.

Further information is available on [The Australian Health Survey](#) home page.

NatStats conference 2010



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!



The Australian Bureau of Statistics is pleased to announce that registrations are now open for the NatStats 2010 Conference.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics, through its initiative, the National Statistical Service, aims to improve the use and understanding of statistics for Australians.

NatStats 2010 will be held from 15 - 17 September 2010 at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour. The conference aims to build on the enthusiasm generated by the inaugural NatStats conference held in 2008.

The overall theme for the conference is "**Measuring what counts: economic development**,

wellbeing and progress in 21st century Australia", which will explore drivers of economic and related social change that are shaping Australia's progress. Conference speakers will highlight the importance of statistics in understanding and responding to these challenges.

As a participant in the NatStats 2010 Conference, you will have the opportunity to contribute your ideas for improving the Australian statistical system for the future.

Dr Ken Henry AC, Secretary to the Commonwealth Treasury, will deliver the opening plenary address at the conference and the Hon Dr Geoff Gallop AC, Director of the Graduate School of Government at the University of Sydney, will deliver a presentation focused around improving the wellbeing of Australians.

Prof Paul Cheung, Director of the United Nations Statistics Division, will also be speaking as part of a detailed panel discussion titled, "Measuring progress: from theory to practice", alongside Dr David Gruen, Director of the Macro-Economic Group at the Treasury.

Other NatStats 2010 speakers include Ms Jane Halton PSM, Secretary of the Department of Health and Ageing who will speak on the role of statistics in health; and Mr Paul McClintock AO, Chairman of the COAG Reform Council, who will be speaking about the measurement of disadvantage, inequality, and social inclusion. In addition, Ms Martine Durand, Chief Statistician and Director of the OECD Statistics Directorate, and Mr Phil Lowe, Assistant Governor (Economic) of the Reserve Bank of Australia, will together examine some of the changes we can expect to witness in the global economy and the implication for Australia.

For a full list of confirmed speakers, program and registration information, please visit the NatStats website or email natstats@nss.gov.au .

NatStats 2010 Event Details

Date: Wednesday 15 - Friday 17 September 2010

Venue: [Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour](#)

\$995 Full Fee

Register now!

Follow NatStats 2010 on [Twitter](#)

New ABS website features



NEW ABS WEBSITE FEATURES

NEW WEB PORTALS

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released the following information portals to assist users in finding data they need:

- [Local Government Portal](#)
- [Small Business Portal](#)
- [Geography Portal](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL

The [Local Government Portal](#) was updated to incorporate new formatting standards and to provide the most current and relevant information available to Local Government Sector clients. These include individual councils, groups of councils and local government associations.

The Local Government portal contains information on the following:

- Finding data for Local Government Areas
- Finding data for States/Territories
- Helping clients use data
- How the ABS uses client data
- Keeping clients informed
- Helpful links for Government.

SMALL BUSINESS PORTAL

The [Services We Provide to Small Business](#) page has been designed to assist small business owners in finding the data they need for market research, profiling customers and planning a business case.

Key features of the page include

- Easy access to commonly used ABS products.
- Links to ABS publications containing data specifically on small business characteristics.
- Links to sources of non-ABS data that can be used to assist with business planning.

GEOGRAPHY PORTAL

The [Geography portal](#) will aid users of ABS data to more easily find information about statistical geography. The Geography portal contains information about the current and future statistical geography used by the ABS, links to information that will assist in using statistics, such as classifications and digital boundaries and 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

The geography portal is the place to find up-to-date information about the changes to statistical geography that will occur in 2011. The ABS primarily uses the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) and Census geographic areas for the dissemination of statistics, but from July 2011, the new Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) will replace the ASGC.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The development of Online [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) was designed to improve our customers' ability to successfully access, use and understand ABS statistics. It targets in particular the 'tourist' category of user, who are not familiar with ABS terminology, statistical concepts or organisation of the ABS website.

Existing banks of information, material and resources developed over a number of years has been integrated into a searchable online tool. Prior to the implementation and release of the FAQs it was difficult to find relevant frequently asked questions regarding specific categories or topics. Having a central place/link on the ABS website will enable users to quickly find FAQs relevant to their particular area of interest. It has been designed to facilitate targeted topic browsing and improved consistency across the ABS website.

Benefits to customers are:

- easier access to ABS statistics.
- facilitates correct use of data for known issues e.g. homelessness statistics.
- assistance in finding currently topical or "in the news" data - particularly relevant for journalists.
- targeted suites of FAQs for specific customer groups e.g. small business.

ABS ACT statistical training program



ABS ACT STATISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAM

DEVELOP YOUR STATISTICAL SKILLS

Each office of the ABS offers practical, informative and relevant training to help you develop your statistical skills. These courses may also be tailored to suit your particular needs or additional programs can be developed as required for presentations at your own locality. The next scheduled courses for the ACT are:

- [Analysing Survey Data Made Simple](#)
- [Turning Data Into Information](#)
- [Understanding Demographic Data](#)
- [Principles of Questionnaire Design](#)
- [Basic Survey Design](#)
- [Using ABS Datacubes in SuperTABLE](#)
- [Making Quality Informed Decisions](#)

Further details on training courses and registrations forms can be found on the [ABS Training home page](#).

How to subscribe



HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

FUTURE RELEASES

Want to keep up with the latest releases of ABS products? Subscribe to our [free email notification service](#).

RSS FEEDS

[RSS \(Really Simple Syndication\)](#) is an alternative way to view the latest statistical information released on the ABS website. You can access RSS feeds for ABS product releases as well as ABS national statistical headlines.

BOOKMARKS

Did you know you can also bookmark specific ABS statistical products or selected pages on the ABS website? Follow our step-by-step instructions for [bookmarking](#) on the ABS website.

ABS MOBILE

Keep in touch with the latest statistics when you are on the move with [ABS Mobile](#).

Disclaimer

Please note that the ABS has implemented a handheld stylesheet that removes images. This enables us to provide you fast loading pages while on a handheld device. Please note that as a result, some graphs and other images may be removed and to see the full statistical product you should visit the full version on the ABS website.

Have your say



HAVE YOUR SAY

CALL FOR FEEDBACK

We would like to hear from you if you have any feedback on the content of the newsletter or suggestions for how it may be improved.

Feedback can be directed to the ABS ACT Regional office.

Telephone: 6525 8900

Fax: 6252 8009

Email: act.office@abs.gov.au

ABS National Information Referral Service (NIRS)

NIRS is the first point of contact for all your statistical and publication enquiries.

Telephone: 1300 135 070

Fax: 1300 135 211

Email: client.services@abs.gov.au

About this Release

ABSTRACT - Statistical News: Australian Capital Territory provides new and relevant information about survey developments, information and training sessions, user consultations, major changes to the statistical program, state/territory data releases and significant ABS data releases.

Explanatory Notes

Abbreviations

ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACR	Australian Capital Region
ASGC	Australian Standard Geographical Classification
ASGS	Australian Statistical Geography Standard
CD	collection district
CMD	Chief Minister's Department
ERP	estimated resident population
IDP	Information Development Plan
MAP	Measures of Australia's Progress
NOM	net overseas migration
NSS	National Statistical Service
SA1	statistical area level 1

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